

I am so proud that 18 volunteers currently are serving from my district in California. They include Jonathan Cotham from Monterey. He's producing 500 environmental educational books in El Salvador, which will help 6,300 folks in local schools; Joshua Twisselman from Salinas. He's teaching English in Madagascar and has an English language radio station.

Just now there are 8,655 Americans currently serving in 80 countries. But Peace Corps service doesn't end when you leave the country. This weekend, more than 1,300 Peace Corps volunteers are here in Washington, D.C. They are the advocates for peace and prosperity and goodwill that the Peace Corps embodies.

Join me in making the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps truly an opportunity to serve our country.

CREATING ECONOMIC CERTAINTY

(Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, solving this Nation's crushing unemployment problem has been my focus since the people of eastern and southeastern Ohio sent me to Washington to start the process of change.

Today I rise to outline five specific actions we must accomplish to create economic certainty, give job creators the confidence they need to begin hiring again, and make American companies more competitive both here at home and globally.

They are: require the Federal Government to balance its budget annually; scrap the current Federal Tax Code and implement a flatter, fairer tax code; eliminate all pending Federal regulations not directly tied to public health or national security; establish a clear national energy policy; and repeal the President's health care law.

Now, I've discussed all of this with countless residents of eastern and southeastern Ohio, and they all like what they hear. But the popularity of this agenda has little to do with me. These ideas are rooted in the American dream, and they can boost America's economy and lead to real job creation.

If this administration wants to help us, we can start creating the jobs Ohio and America needs.

□ 1210

WE LOVE OUR CARRIE MEEK

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. I have asked some of my colleagues to join me today to pay tribute to a wonderful, wonderful stateswoman who represented Florida's 17th Congressional District for more than a decade—Congresswoman Carrie Pittman Meek. It is my present district. As a part of the Congressional

Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference, her colleagues are honoring her today for her distinguished service to greater Miami, to Florida, and to this Nation.

In Congress, she focused on issues near and dear to her heart and to those of her constituents, including economic development, education, affordable housing, and issues affecting Haiti and Haitian Americans.

The Miami-Dade County community has shown its appreciation to her by naming an elementary school, a health clinic, a boulevard, a branch of a local college, and a community center in her honor.

Congresswoman Meek once said, "Service is the price you pay for the space which God has let you occupy." I cannot think of someone who embodies this principle more than she.

Thank you, Carrie Pittman Meek, for standing up for all of us, and we are all standing on your shoulders.

IN TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MICHAEL COLE

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Michael Cole, a distinguished New Jersey resident who died over the weekend and whose funeral will be held tomorrow in Morristown, Morris County.

Michael was among New Jersey's distinguished lawyers and public servants. He served as Governor Thomas Kaine's chief counsel in the 1980s and was very active in heading the board of the New Jersey Legal Services Corporation. Michael was a mentor to more than a generation of New Jersey lawyers, including me when I worked under his leadership in Governor Kaine's administration.

Michael leaves his wife, Jaynee LaVecchia, a member of our State's highest tribunal, the New Jersey Supreme Court, as well as a daughter, Elyse, and a son-in-law and granddaughter.

The State of New Jersey has been enriched enormously by the life of Michael Cole. My wife, Heidi, and I mourn his loss, but join countless New Jerseyans in celebrating his wonderful life.

WE LOVE OUR CARRIE MEEK

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. I want to thank Congresswoman WILSON for bringing us together today to honor a truly exceptional public servant and friend, Congresswoman Carrie Meek.

Carrie Meek's record of accomplishments is truly too long to list, but her unique commitment to fighting for our most vulnerable communities is unmatched. Of course, there is no bigger supporter and protector of Medicare,

Medicaid, and Social Security than Congresswoman Meek, who was a member of the Appropriations Committee; and she actually counseled me to seek a slot on that committee.

So, today, we say thank you for fighting the good fight, and we applaud all of your service and your work, Carrie. Now, in this new chapter of your life, our young people continue to benefit from your wisdom through your foundation, which really deserves all of our support.

Carrie was a friend of my mentor's, our beloved Shirley Chisholm. I miss sharing our memories of Shirley Chisholm, and I also remember so much wise counsel that Carrie gave to me. I remember her sound guidance and also her principled stance. Today, I join in celebrating the many ways in which her work and her spirit have contributed to the success and well-being of countless, countless people throughout south Florida, our country, and our world.

I miss you, Carrie. I miss you especially during this Congressional Black Caucus ALC weekend. I miss your congressional classrooms. We love you. Thank you so much for your leadership. Believe you me, all of us are better people as a result of your being here for so long and for your continuing to fight the good fight for our seniors and for our children.

WE LOVE OUR CARRIE MEEK

(Mr. YOUNG of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to join with my colleagues in their friendly comments about our former colleague from Florida, Carrie Meek.

I first met Carrie when I was representing her brother, who was a retired military veteran and a highly decorated veteran. That relationship ended when we laid him to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. We really got to know each other well when I had the privilege of chairing the Appropriations Committee, and Carrie was a really great member of that Appropriations Committee. I remember, in some of the very tense moments which happened on occasion, she would always find some way to bring a little bit of light and a little bit of pleasure to relieve the tension that was there.

We talked often. I would say Carrie, Why is it that I can never get you to vote right?

And she would say, You know, Chairman, I've been wondering the same thing about you, why I can never get you to vote right.

We had this great relationship. I miss her serving here because she brought a lot to the House. She brought a lot to the committee.

Carrie, like your other colleagues have mentioned, we really love you; and we really appreciate and respect your service to our great Nation.

THE RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT AND THE END OF "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL"

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, the end this week of Don't Ask, Don't Tell shows us that we have nothing to fear and can only gain by extending liberty and equality to all of our citizens. Brave young men and women will not be denied the opportunity to serve their country, and soldiers will be judged on their ability to do their jobs, not on their sexual orientation.

This is a great step forward, but some seem eager to step back. In North Carolina, there is a ballot initiative to amend the State constitution to ban same-sex marriage. This seems to be more about turning out the Republican political base than about marriage, and many of our businesses say it would hinder their attempts to treat employees fairly. We must defeat it.

At the national level, we also have an anachronistic law, the so-called Defense of Marriage Act. This should be repealed. Repeal would ensure that marriages entered into in one State will be recognized by other States. This year, I have again cosponsored repeal and don't intend to rest until DOMA is erased from the U.S. Code.

Madam Speaker, history will judge these efforts at discrimination harshly. It is time for America's political leaders, including Members of this body, to catch up.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, if our Nation's debt crisis has taught us anything, it's that we need a permanent fiscal solution to keep America the permanent land of the free for our children and grandchildren.

There is only one way to bind Congress to such a commitment, and that is a constitutional amendment requiring us to balance the budget. Ordinary spending cuts and pledges to slash the deficit are no longer sufficient.

Washington went on a record-breaking spending binge and left Americans in an economic hangover. New taxes, as some propose, would only punish the victim and reward the spenders with more money to waste. We need to stop spending money we don't have and begin living within our means. The future of our Nation depends on it.

A Washington promise is always temporary. A constitutional amendment is permanent. For the sake of tomorrow's generations, let's get it done today.

□ 1220

WE LOVE OUR CARRIE MEEK

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary woman, a dedicated public servant, and a dear friend: Congresswoman Carrie Meek. Carrie has lived a life of distinction, and her legacy is extensive and incredible.

The granddaughter of a slave, Carrie became the first African American woman to serve in the Florida Senate. My husband, Dexter Lehtinen, and I had the honor of serving with Carrie in the Florida House and then in the Florida Senate, and then Carrie went on to become the first African American from Florida since Reconstruction elected to Congress. What an honor.

While in Congress, Carrie worked vigorously and resolutely for her constituents in all of south Florida, playing an instrumental role in rebuilding our community after the devastation of Hurricane Andrew.

Her accomplishments and service to our south Florida community are too many to be enumerated; however, she hasn't rested on her laurels. Since leaving this Chamber, she continues her commitment to service through The Carrie Meek Foundation.

I ask my colleagues to join us today in paying tribute to our dear friend, Congresswoman Carrie Meek.

JOBS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, we each talk in this Chamber about jobs. The good news is legislation that will create jobs has already been introduced. Now we have to pass it.

The American Jobs Act includes \$50 billion to repair our aging infrastructure. It would create 3,100 jobs in western New York, alone, rebuilding our roads and bridges, which will encourage private development and even further job creation. Economists have concluded that this bill will create 2 million jobs and keep the U.S. from sliding back into recession.

Also, Madam Speaker, according to the Alliance for American Manufacturing, 2.8 million jobs have been lost over the last decade as a result of our trade deficit with China, including 22,000 jobs in western New York, alone. American workers can compete with anyone so long as there is a level playing field, but China is fixing the game through currency manipulation. The Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act would put a stop to that.

The time is long past due for this Congress to pass legislation that will create jobs. I urge the House to take up the American Jobs Act and the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act immediately.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, it is with tremendous pride that I rise today to reaffirm my deep and unwavering commitment to the State of Israel, our greatest friend and closest ally in the Middle East.

This is a country that has celebrated our triumphs and mourned our tragedies, a country that has shared our principles of peace, freedom, and democracy, and, most of all, a country that has, without fail, defended America in her darkest hour.

As the U.N. considers recognizing an independent Palestinian state, it is more important now than ever that we stand up, speak out, and oppose this blatant attempt to circumvent direct talks with Israel. I've joined with many other colleagues in a letter to President Obama urging the U.N. to veto any resolution that grants the Palestinian statehood without direct negotiation with Israel.

Peace cannot be created or sustained through a single unilateral decision from the U.N. I will continue to urge the U.N. to veto, and I will stand with tremendous pride and admiration beside our friends in Israel.

TRAIN ACT—REPUBLICANS' SO-CALLED JOBS BILL

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. Some in Congress want to use the jobs crisis as an excuse to roll back clean air protections that have prevented 200,000 premature deaths.

Today we are debating the TRAIN Act. This is the Republicans' so-called jobs bill, conducting studies that will do nothing but add paper to landfills instead of creating jobs by upgrading toxic power plants so that they are no longer a threat to public health.

The studies have been done. Americans are still breathing mercury, arsenic, and chromium, and we have a means to clean it up. It's called the Clean Air Act, and it was passed in 1963.

No matter what anyone says, increased pollution is not a sustainable path to job creation. Instead, we should be saving lives, saving our environment, and investing in the clean tech jobs of the future.

The TRAIN Act is a train wreck for Americans.

JOBS

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Speaker, few come to this Congress with more interest in protecting air and water than myself, as I did as a prosecutor who actually used the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act for the good of the country. We must find balance.